

Washington, D.C. – Giving public schools the tools they need to protect children from child predators, the House of Representatives passed the School Safety Acquiring Excellence Act of 2006 in a larger child safety package: the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act (H.R. 4472) by a voice vote.

Suburban Caucus Chairman Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL) applauded passage of the major child safety package. “By passing this legislation, we are keeping our commitment to American families by addressing their key concerns,” said Rep. Kirk.

As part of the Suburban Agenda, the School Safety Acquiring Excellence Act of 2006, gives local public school districts expanded access to federal databases when hiring new employees. Sponsored by Congressman Jon Porter, (R-NV), this initiative permits school districts to access FBI criminal data before hiring new teachers, coaches and school personnel.

“Because of current limitations on information-sharing between states, often times critical data on individuals, including whether or not they have committed a crime, never comes to light,” said Rep. Porter. “My legislation will help correct this very dangerous and very real problem.”

In Michigan alone, schools unwittingly hired 2,500 felons convicted of sexual assault, murder and other crimes. Many rapidly growing areas of the country are forced to hire out of state individuals to fill teaching and coaching positions. While all states require background checks, pedophiles and other felons are still hired due to current limitations on information sharing between states.

After House passage in May, the Senate passed an amended version last week sending the bill back to the House for a final vote. The passage of the legislation marks a major victory for suburban families.

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